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A
WORD IN SEASON
TO THE
MEMBERS
OF THE
ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN THE
Diocese of Quebec.

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BY A CHURCHMAN.  
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" It was gravely said by some of the prelates in the Council of Trent, where the doctrine of the Schoolmen bore great sway, that the Schoolmen were like Astronomers which did feign eccentricities and epicycles, and such engines of orbs, to save the phenomena, though they knew there were no such things : and, in like manner, that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtile and intricate axioms and theorems to save the practice of the Church. The causes of superstition are pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies ; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness ; over great reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the Church ; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre ; the favoring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties ; the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations.

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" Superstition without a veil is a deformed thing ; for, as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed ; and as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances."—*Lord Bacon.*

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It was natural to suppose that various pamphlets would appear upon the important subject of synodical action, that both sides of the question would be treated of and discussed. It is pleasing to see that a matter of such consequence as the government of the Church in this Diocese is being taken up with such interest and commented upon with such freedom. The great benefit of free discussions is that the merits of a case are examined in all their varieties, that in such examinations truth for the most part is eliminated. Soberness of judgment, freedom from prejudice and partizanship may be able to extract from the effusions of both parties what are the peculiar objects and views of each.

I have seen several pamphlets upon the subject of synodical action : the most important of these are, "An Address of the Lay Association ;" "The Churchman's Protest, &c., &c., against the Lay Association ;" "A Review of the Address of the Lay Association ;" "A Report of the Meeting held in the National School-house, & c., on the 24th of June."

I am surprised to find that in moderation of tone and mildness of expression the "Address of the Lay Association" is very much superior to its opponents. It confines itself to a plain statement of the matter before it, indulges in no personalities, but passes by in silence the bitter attacks which were made upon it. Attempts to blacken the Association have been and are in vain ; for the names of its most prominent members are a guarantee of its respectability and a proof that its actions are disinterested. And it will be generally found that honesty of purpose and rectitude of intention will sooner or later gain the esteem of the public. The second pamphlet is the "Churchman's Protest, &c.;" this production expresses in a clear and concise way its objections to the views which have been propounded by the Lay Association ; its statements are well condensed, and although its assertions are dogmatic, a prominence is skilfully given to the leading points. The third pamphlet, which purports to be a report of the proceedings in the National School-house, on the 24th of June, is a garbled and falsified report, as any one can see who will take the trouble to look into it. The quality, which it most strikingly displays, is a total want of originality. It dishonestly suppresses anything which militates against the views which it advocates, alters without scruple the public prints from which it professes to copy, and indeed, may be taken as a tolerably fair specimen of the productions of a man who expects others to think for him.

The "Review of the Address of the Lay Association" is a very excellent example of that style of composition which is known by the name of "polemic." It is evidently the work of several hands, clumsily and inharmoniously put together. It was printed at Toronto, and was published in Quebec ; and if we are to believe the current report, is the joint production of six or seven divines of the Upper and Lower Provinces. Bold, intem-

perate and dogmatic, it is not surprising that the "Review" should be more remarkable for energy of expression than for coherency of argument. Grovelling before his ecclesiastical superiors, the writer strives to gain their favor, not only by humbling himself before them, but also by abusing their opponents. His constant cry is "nothing can be done without a Bishop !" He believes that this watchword will ultimately be the rallying point of the laity ; he also believes that he has been fortunate enough to find out a point at which papists, pagans and puritans meet. What or where this point may be we are not informed as accurately as we could wish. There can hardly be said to be any analogy between the Lay Association (the puritans of the author of the "Review") and the Pope "that pagan full of pride." But thus much may be assumed with confidence, that, among the people of Quebec, the opinion will prevail that there is a nearer and closer connection between popery and puseyism, than between popery and the tenets of the Lay Association. The Lay Association might be said to hold strong protestant opinions ; it cannot with truth be said to have any popish tendencies. Such an accusation, from men who openly practise and eagerly ape popish customs, is not less ridiculously absurd than wilfully malicious.

The clerical party seem anxious to throw the odium of the disturbances of the 24th of June upon the well drilled efforts of certain laymen. But it is known perfectly well that there was no system of drill organized, and that the interruption to the harmony of the meeting did not proceed from laymen but from a clergyman. An amendment as to the position which deacons were to hold in synodical meetings, was the first interference with the intended proceedings. A clergyman from Kingsey was the author of this motion, concerning which the "Report" does not condescend to take any notice.

Again, the derogatory epithets, which were used by laymen against clergymen, are faithfully recorded ; but no allusion is made to the strong expressions which were previously employed by clergymen against laymen. The Bishop himself, in a pamphlet has extolled in no measured terms the superior temper which was displayed by the clergy at the aforesaid June meeting. "A quarrel," says his lordship, "requires two parties ; the unequalled meekness of the clergy enabled them to endure without reply the taunts of the laity." Now, a very short time after the mixed meeting at the school-house, a meeting of the clergy took place to take measures for supporting their privileges, &c. At this meeting a clergyman was so fiercely assailed and abused that he was compelled to leave the room in which the meeting was held, and was actually leaving the house, when he was laid hold of and pulled back into the room by some of his clerical brethren, who justly dreaded the scandal which would ensue should any news of this untoward affair reach the ears of the people. As there were no laymen present at the meeting, at which this dispute took place, no blame can reasonably attach to the laity ; the most bigoted partizan must also admit that in this affair the clergy alone were at fault.*

The secret journey of the Bishop to Toronto, and the ignoring of the existence of many of the best friends which the church has had in this diocese, naturally created a feeling of indignation, and demonstrated in the clearest manner the necessity of a body like the Lay Association.

* In a note of the 'Review' it is insinuated that an attempt is made to set the clergy all wrong with their flocks, because the "learned and eloquent Dr. Falloon" is stated to have said what he did really say. I have made careful enquiries with regard to this matter, and I could bring forty or fifty highly respectable witnesses to prove that the "learned and eloquent doctor" did utter words to the effect that "the people in his parish always thought as he did."

An Act is to be prepared affecting the best interests of the laity, yet the majority of the laity are passed over unnoticed, as completely as if they did not exist. By whose advice soever the Bishop acted upon this occasion, it must be admitted that he acted neither wisely nor well. Anything that is secret and underhand, that is not open and aboveboard, is repugnant to the feelings of Englishmen. They have an impression—it may be an erroneous one—that whatever is straightforward and manly will bear the light without shrinking.

I have not been able to detect in what has been written, said, or done by the Lay Association, anything that indicates personal hostility to the Bishop ; I have not been able to find anything that has a tendency to excite a breach between the clergy and laity ; I have not been able to detect any indication, on the part of the laity of the city, to defraud the laity of the country of their fair share of power. If, however, they had any such intention, they would only have copied an example previously set them. For when, upwards of a year ago, at the suggestion of the clergy, the Bishop elected six laymen to represent the laity, and, with six clergymen, to draw up a constitution for the Synod ; his lordship's choice fell upon five laymen of the city, and upon a sixth, who although now living in the country, had resided in town all his life. The rural mind and rural interests were, therefore, less fairly represented here than at the meeting on the 24th of June last, when several gentlemen of weight and intelligence, from the country, were present, who did not object to the views expressed by the laity generally on that occasion. But the Lay Association express the greatest respect for the rights of their country brethren. They invite them to think for themselves. It would appear, however, that it is a crime to urge people to exercise their privileges as free members of the church, or to exhort them to rea-

son upon what they are about to do, not to follow blindly like sheep. It is certain that in all ages of ecclesiastical history, any such attempt has been considered factious and schismatical.

The design, both of the clerical party and of the Lay Association, is the same ; both undoubtedly wish to influence the Easter election of delegates to the Synod ; both know that much will depend upon the men who will constitute that body. The method of proceeding, which has been adopted by these two parties, is very dissimilar. The Lay Association has openly declared and clearly stated the principles upon which it intends to act. The clerical party does not meet fairly or confute logically any of these statements, but begs all questions of law, assumes where it cannot prove, and denounces—even from the altar—the Lay Association as innovating and heretical, and extols the Bishop's veto as the concentrated essence of true churchism, the safeguard of the country laity. The Lay Association has only the press, or an occasional visit of a member, when invited to a country mission. The clerical party has a spiritual police which pervades the country, which enjoys a personal and pastoral influence which, with some honorable exceptions, warns from the pulpit and freely distributes both pamphlets and prejudice. And if it be true that most of these Clerical planets revolve compliantly round an ecclesiastical centre, that orders from head-quarters are performed promptly and without hesitation ; then every exertion ought to be made that the high responsibility of framing the constitution under which churchmen are to live, should not devolve, as regards the lay element, upon uninformed or obsequious delegates. It has been stated most unjustly that the laity of the city are desirous of claiming higher privileges than their brethren of the country. Nothing can be more untrue than such a statement. The Laity of the

city can have, and desire to have no separate interests from the laity of the country ; their views and objects must be similar, if not identical ; for they must both equally desire the advancement and prosperity of the church to which they belong.

One of the principal accusations, which have been made against the Lay Association is, that they have sought to engender distrust and separation between the clergy and the laity. I am sorry to say that clergymen, in some instances, have not hesitated to countenance such a report. But, when we examine into the matter, we find that the clergy were the first to separate themselves from the laity. In the June meeting, the clergy proposed that they should vote by orders. The laity resisted this demand, because it was unknown in law, contrary to British practice, unauthorized in the church until provided for in the constitution. Strictly speaking, all who were present at that preliminary meeting, whether Bishop, Clergy, or Laymen, were present under the comprehensive character given by the law of "members of the Church of England." If any one will take the trouble to look into the garbled "Report" of that meeting, to which I have alluded, he will see that it was the clergy who first clamoured to be separated from the laity.

It seems to me, carefully considering these matters, that the Lay Association and the clerical party arrive at entirely different conclusions, because they reason upon entirely different premises. The clerical party look upon a Bishop as a kind of deity who is gifted with certain mysterious powers which he can impart at will to whomsoever he pleases. The Lay Association agree with the laity generally in looking upon a Bishop as an officer who presides over (oversees) the affairs of the church. The one party speaks of the "Church this," and the "Church that," and the "Church at large ;" the peculiar proper-

ties or position of which only the initiated can define. The other party looks upon the laity as composing the *ecclesia* or church, and upon the clergy as their ministers. It would be idle to deny that the clerical party can find men of authority who will sanction almost any extreme way of thinking. But it is not from the extreme of party rancor that truth is to be obtained.*

If we ascend to the very earliest days of ecclesiastical antiquity, we find that the apostles declined any legislation in ecclesiastical government which would interfere with future ages or change of circumstances. The internal constitution of each little christian society was founded upon a basis of independence and equality; no formal union existed among these different societies, but they were bound together with ties of love and faith. We are told that in these little communities, "the want of discipline and human learning was supplied by the occasional

* The clerical party seem to look upon the Fathers as of equal authority with the Scriptures. One of the pamphlets which have been lately issued quotes St. Ignatius as an authority from whom there is no appeal. The same pamphlet also settles and arranges events which are but imperfectly known, with an insolent dogmatism which forms the most striking characteristic of the publication. It would be well to remember that there are always two sides to a question. The epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrneans unquestionably exalts the episcopal dignity, but its genuineness and authenticity have been questioned by many eminent scholars. I do not intend to open up the controversy in these pages; I would merely observe that a statement taken from writings, the genuineness and authenticity of which are doubted, does not carry great weight with it. The maxim *nulla ecclesia sine episcopo* belongs to the time of Tertullian. Let any one compare what is said of Bishops in the epistles ascribed to Ignatius, with what is said upon the same subject by the apostles themselves, or by St. Clement, whose epistle was probably of the same date as the Book of Revelations, and he can hardly fail to acknowledge that there are great differences both in tone and sentiment.

assistance of prophets, who were called to that function without distinction of age or of natural abilities, and who, as often as they felt the divine impulse, poured forth the effusions of the spirit in the assembly of the faithful." Upon the cessation of the office of prophet, deacons (male and female) were established, then presbyters or priests, and after these the bishops or episcopi. Several passages of Scripture prove that the terms presbyter and bishop were used indiscriminately to denote the same order of persons and the same office. Each society had a certain number of these "episcopal presbyters," whose authority was equal. In the course of time one was elected annually, who presided over the affairs of the community for the space of a year. The office of president or overseer, which was at first held only for a year, gradually became a life office. But its powers were only exercised with the advice of the presbyters or priests, and with the consent of those who composed the church, ecclesia or assembly. As it has been well said, the Bishops of the early church were simply the first of their equals, the honorable servants of a free people. We have the authority of Tertullian himself for the fact that, at the election of a new president or bishop, the laity thought that they became part of the priesthood. His words are *Nonne et Laici sacerdotes sumus?*

For more than a hundred years after the death of the apostles, the christian communities were governed in this manner. As their numbers increased, it was thought that a bond of union, which would draw together and unite these communities by common ties of interest, would give individuality as well as combination and strength to the christian body. Towards the close of the third century, the first regular Synods were established. These Synods consisted almost entirely of the bishops or presidents of the different communities; presbyters and the people were

admitted, but they had no voice in the discussion. From the establishment of these Synods, dates the rise of the episcopal power. Bishops soon ceased to be mere elective officers of the presbyters, and gradually assumed to themselves those high privileges which they have since for the most part enjoyed. It is pretended that their authority is derived directly from God, that they are endowed with high and mysterious virtues which they can impart to others, that in all spiritual matters their authority in their dioceses is absolute. If we were to enquire who it is that claims such lofty power for, or endeavors thus to exalt the bishops and the clergy, should we be surprised to find that bishops and clergy were the party in question? If authority is wanted for these purposes, reference is made to some old writer, who was a bishop or a priest. The laity of the present day are expected to receive his *ipse dixit* as gospel and to bow before its infallible decrees. Now, I would humbly submit that it is not considered a mark of worldly prudence or wisdom, to take any person's word for his own worth. The man who would extol himself highly, or who would claim immunities or privilege for his office, would be looked upon with suspicion. Only two classes of men enjoy a time-honored and prescriptive right to (what is vulgarly called) butter themselves—Hottentots and Homeric heroes. The opinions of the early reformers concerning the powers of bishops were very different from those now in vogue in this diocese. Bishops Hooper, Ridley, Jewel, Parkhurst, &c., &c., looked upon episcopacy as a useful but not as a divine institution.—Cranmer plainly avowed that there was, in his opinion, no difference in the primitive times between bishop and presbyter. During the reign of Elizabeth, the bishops were little more than her ministers. Elizabeth saw clearly the great power which she enjoyed as Head of the Church through the bishops; when she wished to carry into

effect any great project which was at all tinged with unpopularity, she issued an order to her bishops desiring them to take such measures that the project should be explained and duly commented upon in every church in the kingdom. This exercise of power the great Queen emphatically called a *tuning* of the people. To indicate the change which took place in religious feeling, in one generation, it may be mentioned that James was prepared to barter his power, and to allow the Pope a modified supremacy, in order that he might be able to marry his son into one of the great continental houses. Let any one compare the clergy of the Reformation, the clergy which followed Cranmer, with the clergy of the time of Laud, and he will see a similar change. From being looked upon as a useful ecclesiastical polity, episcopacy began to be invested with high and sacred privileges which no human power could give or take away.

I cannot see anything that should induce us to tie our faith to such times. In those days the divine right of kings was as firmly believed in as the divine right of bishops, and grave writers have contended that the monarch possessed the god-like gift of curing disease by his touch. Yet in what category would we place any individual who endeavored to prove the divine right of kings, or the power of curing the king's evil, by quotations from Filmer or any other writer of that way of thinking? Still we all know that the philosopher Locke was expelled from Oxford for writing against the absurd opinions of Filmer.

Perhaps the two points, about which the clergy seem most eager, are, that the power of *velo* should be held by the bishop, and that laymen before becoming members of synod should undergo a sacramental test.

In England the power of the bishop is regulated by the laws of the land. Here his power is absolute. No

one who is injured, even though by episcopal inadvertence, has any right of appeal ; he must abide by the injury which he has received. In these remarks allusion is made merely to the office of bishop, not to the temporary occupant, whatever may be his virtues or his infirmities. The veto, however, is a power which could not be safely trusted to any one man, however good he might be. The clergy, with some exceptions, say that the veto is essential to, or inherent in, the episcopal office ; and at the same time urge that the power of vetoing should be granted to the bishop by the synod. There seems some inconsistency in this reasoning ; for, if the power of veto can be bestowed by the synod, it must be admitted that it can also be withheld by the same body. A curious enquirer might ask, what then becomes of the *essence* of the episcopate ? Few people would object to a modification of the veto to prevent any hasty or violent changes, such as is judiciously proved by the Lay Association in their draft of a constitution ; but if the sense of the synod is clearly expressed for two years in succession, no hasty or violent change need be dreaded, and the measure should then be adopted. The bishop might say that he would never oppose the wishes of the majority of the diocese, and (no doubt) he would mean what he said. But let us, merely in illustration of this, look at facts, at things which *have* happened, not at things which *may* happen. Let it be supposed that the bishop says that he would never put himself in opposition to the wishes of the majority of the churchmen of his diocese. The sense of a majority would just now be very much in favor of an excellent society, which is virtually excluded from working in this diocese. The Colonial Church and School Society is a society which was expressly constituted for the benefit of the colonies. This society would supply the country districts with teachers and schools, would liberally help the underpaid

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clergy, would send out and maintain missionaries of its own. Two archbishops and upwards of twenty bishops have sanctioned its proceedings with their approval. Her Majesty the Queen, the temporal head of the Anglican Church, is its gracious patron. We have spiritual distress, ignorance, underpaid clergy,—a society offers to assist us in our difficulties, and its aid is rejected, because the whole affairs of the society are not placed under the immediate influence and control of the bishop. All that the society asks is to be allowed to appoint those whom it pays (subservient to the approval of the bishop) and to receive an account of the moneys which it expends. Other bishops and other dioceses welcome it, but in this diocese its moderate requests have been rejected. One clergyman high in favor even went the length of advising the society to take refuge among the Methodists. In a *full* meeting of the central board of the Church Society, an attempt was made to leave unacknowledged certain assistance which had been received from the Colonial Church and School Society. *Five* clergymen did all in their power to carry through this attempt. All the laymen present, the best friends of the church in the diocese, and most of the clergy strenuously opposed the attempt. The Bishop threw the whole influence of his authority, personal and official, into the scale of the minority. Such things show us what we would have to expect were we to allow the power of veto to be wielded by any individual. Why should we forge a chain for our own necks? Why should we take our precedents in what relates to bishops from the fathers of the third century, in preference to the apostles themselves? The fierce rhetoric of Tertullian and the bold craft of Cyprian assign far higher powers to the episcopal office than will be found in the writings of the apostles. In the scriptures we do not see the primitive bishop adorned with the mitre of the prelate, or

enveloped in that haze of misty divinity which now surrounds him. The great apostle of the Gentiles himself says, with noble pathos, "these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me."

It has been said that the word *veto* has been purposely chosen to render the power which the veto would confer upon the bishop odious in the eyes of the people. Those who talk in this rash and inconsiderate manner show that they are not accurately acquainted with a subject upon which they decide so peremptorily and dogmatically. Now, it is well known that the tribune's veto is a very different thing from a bishop's veto. The tribune's veto was odious to the wealthy and noble, but was looked upon with affection by the plebeians. What analogy is there between the two vetos? Might I be pardoned for recommending to the writers of polemical tracts the propriety of brushing up their historical knowledge. In discussing theological matters, a bold dogmatic assertion is perhaps preferable to any attempt at reasoning. But in matters which come within the domain of our old friend Pinnock, the same method of argument would hardly be so successful.

The author of the "Review of the Address &c." quotes Dr. Burnet and Father Paul to prove that puritanism (the Lay Association) and popery are in many points one and the same thing. They certainly do agree in one point at least, viz: that a bishop is not a perfect infallible creature. The pope was of opinion that it was wrong to entrust absolute power to any bishop. With the case of Father Chiniquy before us, few people will say that the sovereign pontiff was wrong. But we Protestants claim higher privileges and immunities than Roman Catholics ever thought of doing. What is the use of these privileges and immunities, of the right of private judgment, &c., &c., if we are to be checked and restrained by a strong coercive mea-

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sure like the veto? Should it be deemed desirable to make use of the veto in the deliberations of the synod, it is a gift which can at any future time be easily conferred. But prudence would certainly dictate that a trial should first be made without that dangerous power; for we should remember that however objectionable it may be found, it cannot be revoked. If we look across the lines to the episcopal church in the United States, and examine the working of its machinery with regard to vetos, we shall find that where there is no veto, the church flourishes; that where the veto does exist, the church does not advance. Vermont is the only diocese out of the 35 in the United States in which the veto exists. In 1839 that diocese had 22 clergymen; in 1857 the number had increased to 23, thus shewing an increase of one clergyman in eighteen years. The increase during the same period in the other dioceses of New England ranged from 50 to 340 per cent. Such facts as these speak volumes. Our colonial diocesan synods are as yet untested experiments; the organization in the United States has been long tried. It would be well for us to pause and consider before we fly into the face of, and act directly opposite to statements which are supported by such convincing figures. I here agree most cordially with the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, who, in his recent circular, dated 21st February last, solemnly warns the clergy and the people against precipitate conduct in the new experiment of synodical action. He says, "we must guard our people against the imagination that we are to rush at our experiment, as if we had now got at our opportunity to carry out this or that favorite object,—to give vent to, and to exercise some eager prepossession, or to effect some sudden and sweeping renovation of affairs. We must enter upon and with careful and cautious steps, &c." The clerical party will surely see that to give vent to their

eager prepossessions respecting the *veto*, will be to reject the excellent advice of their diocesan ; and the faithful laity will surely see that to save the synod from rushing at the experiment of the *veto*, and to withhold from the bishop that power which can be given at any time, but never recalled, will be but to take the careful and cautious steps which he enjoins.

With regard to the proposal that no one shall be allowed to legislate for the church who is not a communicant, I am surprised that there can be two opinions. In former days, the Test Act was looked upon as the rampart of religion, and the Corporation Act as the bulwark of liberty ; but we live in better times. The principle of the thing is contrary to the feelings of the present age. It has always been a boast of the Anglican Church that, in all that regards participation in the Holy Communion its members enjoy that liberty which christians should enjoy. To make the sacrament of the Lord's Supper a necessary qualification for being a member of the synod is an ill-judged, ill-considered attempt to foster hypocrisy in the laity and to increase the power of the clergy. It *does* seem strange that this one thing only should be deemed necessary to qualify for membership for the synod. Will it be creditable to the synod, that conduct which is condemned even by the world, should be so far venial in the eyes of the church, that the church member, for instance, whose gambling and swindling practices, whose fraudulent bankruptcies, and readiness to grind the face of the poor, combine to exclude him from respectable society, deprive him of commercial confidence, and entail upon him the execrations of the suffering, should be qualified to enjoy the privileges of legislating for the church, if only, fresh from his pursuits, he will but add to his other crimes one crime more, that of unworthily partaking of the Lord's Supper. Guilt, vice, and ignorance can easily conform to such

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a narrow rule, but surely it is a strange test of orthodoxy. It is not that people object to partake of the Holy Communion, but they do strongly object to the principle which the making of it a test involves. A man of an ingenious and enquiring mind might propose to himself a curious question, viz : what amount of self-legislative power will the Anglican Church in this Province really enjoy, if the synod is to consist of men in a manner chosen by the clergy, and if its measures are to be at the mercy of the *veto* of the bishop ?

No church equals that of Rome in the multiplicity of her tests. Yet, surely there is not more purity or intelligence in her pale than in the Church of England. There is no church in christendom in which the clergy wield so much power as in the Roman Catholic Church, or in which the laity groan beneath such abject slavery. Why then should we imitate her in one of her worst points ?

I shall not enter upon the question whether any bishop for the time being is the real as well as the ostensible ruler of the church in his diocese. That the episcopal authority is wielded sometimes by those who are not episcopal, cannot be doubted ; yet our obedience is expected to be equally prompt and submissive under all circumstances. We are told continually that we ought to do so and so, because the rubric tells us to do it. Men must be blind indeed when they cannot see that the rubric is only minutely followed by the clergy when it suits their purposes. Is the service in the cathedral performed according to the rubric ? Every one knows to the contrary ; yet should the laity remonstrate with their minister upon the revival of some exploded ceremony or the undue prominence which is given to some empty form, they are told by the ecclesiastical authorities that he only acts according to the rubric. A young clergyman in England, who had a

great reverence for the Cyprianic age, attempted to indulge in certain Romanizing tendencies for which he declared authority could be found in the rubric ; when reprimanded by his bishop for giving offence to his congregation, the young man answered that he had taken certain vows, and that his *conscience* would not allow him to act contrary to the rubric. "Have you daily prayers in your church?" asked the bishop ; "No, my Lord," was the answer. "Then, I think, sir, before you talk about *conscience*, you should remember that the rubric has appointed a morning and evening service to be read daily in the church. It is somewhat inconsistent in you when your conscience permits you to leave that important duty undischarged, to talk about your conscientious scruples in minor matters." I do not know of any church in the diocese of Quebec in which daily service is read once, much less twice, on every day. The clergy may say that there would be no attendance, but that is not the point ; if daily service is not offered it is impossible for the laity to attend, and therefore no fault can attach to them. But surely the clergy incur a grave responsibility when they act in direct opposition to the rubric in so important a particular. Are we not told that "wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of God, he will be in the midst of them?"

There is one very important subject which ought to be taken into consideration by the members of the Anglican Church in this diocese, viz, the non-advancement of the church. In the city of Quebec the numbers of the Church of England for some years have not increased. Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists have built new churches, or enlarged their old ones, and they are yet able to fill them. It is notorious that many seats in some of these churches are filled by people who are, or who have been, sincerely attached to the

Church of England. If we are asked how comes it that families are thus lost to the church, who entertain no scruples about her articles, her liturgy or her government ? we are compelled to answer, that favoritism and partizanship are substituted for large and liberal principles in the management of her affairs, while the sentiments and wishes of the masses are utterly disregarded by her authorities. It is only fair to state that among the clerical party can be found men who think that such imperfect churchmen as those to whom I have alluded would be better out of the church than in it. To use their own expression, "Sweep the rubbish out of the church." If, in spite of such sweepings, which have been for many years driving away numbers of her best friends, there still remain within her pale any rubbish of dissatisfaction and discontent, who are to blame for it ? and why not rather remove the causes than cling to a system which is daily sacrificing so many of her members ?

Both parties seem to be impressed with the importance of the ensuing Easter meeting ; but the clergy seem to think that none have a right to interfere in the elections except themselves. If they are to attend as clergymen, it is unconstitutional for them to interfere in the elections of the laity. In the dark ages, when a man who could read and write was looked upon as a kind of magician, we can easily understand the superior influence of the clergy. They were the only educated class, and they enjoyed the influence which naturally arises from superior intelligence. But they no longer possess that superiority which a monopoly of learning confers. A clergyman busies himself *unconstitutionally* about the election of lay representatives for the synod, and in the opinion of his party he does what is right and proper. A layman ventures *constitutionally* to do the same thing, and is surprised and shocked to find that he is looked upon as a heretic and a parricide.

It is sought to impose a test upon the laymen of the church, but I cannot see why the clergy should be exempted from giving proof, not of their zeal for the church, but of their ability to discharge the duties of the office which they hold. It has been generally thought that a knowledge of the language from which the gospel and epistles were translated, is supremely necessary for a clergyman. Would such a qualification thin too much the clerical benches to be practicable? If not, it would be worth trying. I cannot help thinking that much might be done by the appointment of a board of examiners consisting of two or three laymen. I throw this out merely as a suggestion.

The Lay Association has been accused of misrepresenting the bishop's journey to Toronto. It is certain that the bishop's immediate friends and relations, clerical and lay, have often boasted of that exploit. If there was anything reprehensible or contrary to honesty in what his lordship did there, the Lay Association is not to blame; it merely states the facts as they happened. The Lay Association bowed with submission to the new law, and in exhorting the laity to maintain their rights, set a good example of ignoring past differences. But a calm investigation of their rights would have led the people to understand them, and would perhaps have induced them to act independently of clerical dictation. The clerical party, in their recent pamphlets, have certainly done their best to keep alive past disputes, to disturb old sores, to accomplish by prejudice what enquiry and reasoning might defeat.

I will venture to hope that the laymen of the church will be duly impressed with the importance of choosing proper representatives for the approaching synod, for their legislation will long influence the progress of the church in this diocese. It must be the wish of every one

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that men should be chosen who will perform their duty independently, who will exercise the right of private judgment untrammelled by prejudices and unswayed by authority. May they act honestly and wisely as well as zealously ; may their conduct be characterised by gentleness and forbearance as well as by vigor and uprightness. As subjects of the British empire they have enjoyed the blessings of civil liberty. May their practical sagacity and rational behaviour in legislating for the government and constitution of their church show that they are not insensible of the blessings of that liberty which they have so long enjoyed. They would do well to remember that there are certain important duties which they owe to the welfare of their church and of their children. Any rash or unconsidered deviation from these duties will long be severely felt by all classes of churchmen throughout this diocese. May their good sense teach them to reject all popish innovations, all attempts at reviving exploded forms and ceremonies, and to cling fast to that liberty with which Christ has made them free.